



Written by [Brian Koenig](#) on January 9, 2012

Union Workers Overwhelmingly Benefit from ObamaCare Waivers

"Friday marks the last time HHS will have to update the total number of waivers, putting to rest a recurring political firestorm," [writes](#) Sam Baker of *The Hill*. "The department had been updating its waiver totals every month, prompting monthly attacks from the GOP."



Indeed, not only has the number of waivers granted by the department stirred a hailstorm of controversy, but it has also displayed an incontrovertible pattern of crony capitalism, as the law openly leans on the side of labor unions, who just so happen to be strong Democratic supporters who wield tremendous political influence. Ever since the administration strapped a tighter leash on application rules, the unionized sector has remained a prominent beneficiary of ObamaCare waivers.

"Documents released in a classic Friday afternoon news dump show that labor unions representing 543,812 workers received waivers from President Barack Obama's signature legislation since June 17, 2011," noted the *Daily Caller*. "By contrast, private employers with a total of 69,813 employees, many of whom work for small businesses, were granted waivers."

Naturally, ObamaCare's most zealous opponents, who range from Republican politicians to industry groups to conservative pundits, have been quick to excoriate the administration's arbitrary waiver handouts, as these critics expand their allegation that ObamaCare is "unworkable." In response to a bombardment of politically toxic criticism, the department defended those provisions in the law granting waiver eligibility, saying they display the law's "flexibility" in adapting to specific cases where a company or other affiliation should be exempt.

All in all, the ObamaCare waivers excuse roughly four million people, or about three percent of the U.S. population, from having to participate in the program, the HHS stated Friday. The 1,231 figure embodies all waiver requests the department has granted so far, including three-year waivers and one-year waivers and/or extensions to companies. Overall, the HHS denied 96 waiver requests.

Being bombarded with monthly waves of GOP criticism, the HHS said last summer it would cease all applications for one-year waivers and would accept or deny waivers through the end of 2013.

The department revised provisions regarding application rules for the exemptions last June, amid a relentless flood of controversial news reports, including a May 17 [exposé](#) by the *Daily Caller* revealing that nearly 20 percent of the ObamaCare waivers approved last April went to House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi's California district:



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Of the 204 new Obamacare waivers President Barack Obama's administration approved in April, 38 are for fancy eateries, hip nightclubs and decadent hotels in House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi's Northern California district.

That's in addition to the 27 new waivers for health care or drug companies and the 31 new union waivers Obama's Department of Health and Human Services approved.

Pelosi's district secured almost 20 percent of the latest issuance of waivers nationwide, and the companies that won them didn't have much in common with companies throughout the rest of the country that have received ObamaCare waivers.

In the early stages of ObamaCare, labor unions overwhelmingly supported the legislation, and conveniently, nearly half a million of their workers are now exempt from the law. And considering the generous public and financial support such proponents have provided for the Obama campaign — contributing in excess of [\\$400 million](#) during the 2008 election cycle, nearly all of which went to Democrats — such political massaging is easily predictable.

Naturally, the President feels indebted to his most influential political advocates, and he has been feeding this political alliance since well before he was elected President, as he indicated in his 2006 book, *The Audacity of Hope*: "So I owe these unions. When their leaders call, I do my best to call them back right away. I don't consider this corrupting in any way."



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